

# Brethren Evangelist

"I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life."—Jesus

VOLUME XXIII.

ASHLAND, O., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1901.

No. 49.

## Editorial

### Christmas Thoughts.

#### I

Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior which is Christ the Lord. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men. And they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.

#### II

The first Christmas morning! It was the brightest morning that ever dawned on earth, a morning of joy and gladness. The advent of princes into this world may be the occasion of great rejoicing thru out a whole kingdom, but the advent of Jesus on that eventful morning was a morning of joy thru out the universe, joy among the stars, joy among the angels, joy in the heart of God, joy that thrilled all heaven, a joy that will yet fill all the earth with the everlasting song of the angel choir, "Glory to God."

#### III

With the birth of Jesus of Nazareth there was born to the world a new hope. The religions of antiquity could offer no hope to despairing humanity. The world was a dreary wilderness of woe, and all its philosophies and science and skepticism, materialism and agnosticism could shed no light on the grave and the unknown future. The Stoic philosophy "Let us eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die," was the best the religions and philosophies of the world could offer to hopeless, helpless humanity. But the song of the angels on that night when the heavens disclosed their minstrels was a song of hope, of light, of cheer, yea, a song of immortality, a song which brought sunshine and gladness into the sad and desolate heart of lost man, and opened to him new visions of the unknown future. "On the gloom and despair of the ages, without God and without hope, the Sun of Righteousness arose in noontide splendor, and illumined the world." Darkness and despair and hopelessness vanished before it like the mist of the morning at the rising of the June sun.

#### IV

With the birth of Christianity was born a new idea of humanity. Before the advent of Jesus the world had a false conception of man. The dignity, the individual responsibility, the relationship between God and man and the relationship between man and man, were only vaguely realized before the advent of Christianity. The Fatherhood of

God, the Sonhood of the Lord Jesus, the Spirithood of the Holy Ghost and the consequent brotherhood of man are purely Christian ideas. The value of the human soul, the true idea of humanity, the grandeur of man as created in the image of his Maker, the intrinsic nature of man in his relations to God and immortality, these are conceptions for the revelation of which we are indebted to Christianity. Since the memorable morning when Jesus made his advent into the world man began to assume his rightful place as a creature of God, made in his image, capable of infinite possibilities, a creature of amazing dignity and tremendous destiny. Human greed and selfishness have been great stumbling blocks to the attainment of the Christian idea and conception of man in Christ Jesus, but gradually the Christ idea is overcoming both greed and selfishness and the spirit of the universal brotherhood of man, the true expression of the Fatherhood of God, is taking their place. The world's "religion of humanity" or the doctrine of humanitarianism is utterly destitute of all the elements or principles of the divine life, and the only religion of humanity that is worth the name, that can lift man into fellowship with God, companionship with the higher intelligences of both heaven and earth, the religion whose life is love, whose motto is the golden rule of Jesus, whose ultimate conception of human society is the brotherhood of man, the complete regeneration, sanctification, and perfect freedom of the soul, is the religion which was born in Bethlehem more than nineteen hundred years ago,

#### V

Christ is the world's Christmas tree. There are found gifts for all and that which each deserves the most. God's gift is not to be laid up in a napkin, but to be used in our every day life. There is nothing in the plan of nature that is useless. Is it then possible, that any of us can lightly esteem the very planet and axis of our salvation? Do you know of some poor waif of sin who needs the gift of God? If so, tell them of the free gift and that today is the day when whosoever will may come and take freely. From this Yule-tide and forever, let each of us make of God's Christmas gift the choice of Ruth, the Moabite.

#### VI

Christ is God's Christmas gift. Christmas is the beginning of a series of object lessons of God's love. The Kindergarten lesson was given one night in a stable of Bethlehem; the object, the babe in the manger; the first pupils, the shepherds. This is when and where God gave his best gift. While this is true, yet the babe of Bethlehem was but the birth of an effort. The results from that birth should nerve us to conceive and beget the best efforts.